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MONTEREY NEWS

January, 1981

OUR TOWN

"Why Your Taxes Went Up"

by the Monterey Board of Assessors

Let us begin by realizing that EVERY tax bill in Monterey went up. The Board estimated that the average increase would be 40%. If your taxes increased by less than 40%, consider yourself fortunate. If your taxes went up by more than 40%, there are special reasons, or we made a mistake. In either case, we would be glad to go over the process with you.

Last year, Fiscal Year 1980, the gross amount to be raised to cover all our obligations to the state, county and the various town meetings was \$536,552.93. This year in Fiscal 1981 the amount increased to \$734,353.87. In addition, our obligations to the state and county increased, and the aid received from the state decreased. Our local receipts for this year will be less than last year, due to the lowering of the Motor Vehicle Excise from \$.66 to \$.25 per thousand. The final amount which was approved by the state to be raised by taxes this year was \$436,921.80. Last year, we raised \$303,555.15 in taxes. The increase of \$133,366.55 figures to an increase of \$.5.10 on last year's valuation of \$26,396,100, with a tax rate which would have jumped from 11.50 to 16.60, or a tax rate of 13.80 on this year's valuation of \$31,661,000. In either case, your actual tax dollars would be the same.

Speaking of valuations, or assessments, the state has advised us that our total assessed value which was estimated by the state to be \$31,530,000 for 1980 must now be increased to \$35,628,000 for 1981. Because the present Building Permits include only 5 houses and sheds, we will probably have to effect another "across the boards" factoring up of values to meet the goal. HOWEVER, the crucial element in taxes is the amount of dollars to be raised by taxation, not the assessment. The assessed values are the means of proportioning the tax bill. If we maintain the same relationships in values, the proportion remains the same. Theoretically, we could increase the values twice fold, and if the amount to be raised by taxes remains the same, the taxes will remain the same. There is one financial truism we have to face: if we buy more, it costs more.

Apart from the Motor Vehicle Excise, taxes will not decrease much due to "Proposition 2½". Monterey's taxes have never come to even 1¼% of assessed value, and the next budget will be figured on our 1979 relationship of 1.011%. Neighboring Towns have met the problem by curtailing services and charging use fees. It seems likely that Monterey will have to take similar steps to offset inflation.

Time Magazine and Yankee Magazine Slides of Energy Contest to be Shown

An impromptu mid-winter community dinner is scheduled for Wednesday, January 21 at 6:30 PM. Carole Allen of Yankee Magazine and Steve Liss of Time Magazine will present a show of slides they took in Monterey during the International Energy Contest in October, 1980. Protocol is the same as always: Bring a casserole, a salad or a desert. Bring your own place setting.

Energy Project Report

There is good reason to believe that the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy Resources will award the town of Monterey more than \$20,000 towards the construction of its planned energy-efficient firehouse. Exact figures aren't known yet but we expect the Energy Office to fund almost all of the energy-related equipment for the new building. Stay tuned.

I wanted to alert Monterey townspeople to a new state program of home energy audits. The program is called the Energy Conservation Service and will be administered by a group of electric and gas utilities, MASS-SAVE. All utility customers will be paying for the program and you can expect your monthly bills to go up 40 cents a month for 5 years. You're paying for the program so I thought you might want to take advantage of it. For \$10 an auditor will come to your home and check for leaks, check insulation levels, perform some estimates for solar energy potential, etc., and advise you on home energy improvements. I have no reports as yet on the quality of the audits

(continued on next page)

Mickey Friedman

This winter the Planning Board is undertaking a thorough revision and update of the Town Zoning Bylaw, basing the revision on the discussions at public meetings held for the purpose in the last two years and on information about inadequacies and discrepancies in the present Bylaw from the Board of Appeals, the Board of Selectmen, and local citizens. For example, we are reviewing the list of permitted uses of the Agricultural-Residential district and clarifying the regulations controlling multifamily dwellings and group homes. A proposal to create a Conservancy-residential district which came out of the citizen group meetings and the Town Land Use Plan, and which would protect sensitive aquifer areas in town, is being considered. There will soon be notice in the newspapers of a Public Hearing to consider this Bylaw revision; the final step will be adoption of the revisions by vote at the Town Meeting.

Joe Baker

Grace Zerra, Peter Schulze, Paul Zerra and Dara Janssen extend their greetings to the community and invite everyone to stop in and say "hi". The winter hours for the Cafe will be 5:30-9:30 on Friday and Saturday for dinner, and 10:00-2:00 on Sunday for Brunch. The store will be open Friday and Saturday from 10:00 to 10:00 and Sunday from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM., and odd hours during the week while re-organization is in process.

Ken Heath, Son of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Heath, is at Paris Island in South Carolina in his basic training with the Marines. He will finish basic training and be home for his first visit in the next few days.

The Annual Town Reports are done. To save money it is requested that people pick up their copies at the town offices. The hours are 10AM to 1PM each day except Thursday. That includes Saturday. If you cannot pick yours up call Cynthia Weber at 520-1443 and your copy will be mailed to you.

MONTEREY HOMEOWNERS

Protect your homes with twice a week checks of
heating, plumbing and security and plant watering.

References available
Pat Christie 520-9539

THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

(Condensed version of the minister's report to the Monterey United Church of Christ)

There is a persistent vision that appears and reappears over and over in the human story. The image of people living in community, and ever seeking to improve the quality of that community simply will not go away. The Judeo-Christian heritage has maintained a picture of community under the broad titles "Kingdom of God" or "Kingdom of Heaven". The images of the true community are varied. Yet in the search for community the values of justice, peace and love are predominant themes.

Why is the search for "the beloved community" so persistent? Why, in spite of the long trail of war and injustice will the dream not die? The roots of our humanity reach down much deeper and into a richer soil than we imagine. We are rooted in pure stronger, truer qualities than our day to day experiences sometimes leads us to believe? There are three fundamentally divergent views that try to explain the human story. 1) To be human is to be enmeshed in a stream of corruption beginning with our very first ancestors. 2) We are "blank pages" at birth waiting to be filled in by experience. 3) We are created in the image of God and this image is firmly embedded in every living person. I have a bias that I would make clear to all. It contains elements of all three of these views. To be human is to share in an existence that is flawed and incomplete. Yet the Eternal is indubitably stamped in each living person. There is a shaping, "a writing upon us", that comes to us from what we experience - and from the way we respond to it. Our humanity is much too complex to imagine we can tell our story by any one of the three views.

Now let us bring the issue to focus on the way this undying vision of communities of justice, peace and love come into contact with the actual communities we are. Our actual communities are flawed. Fears persist. Injustices prevail. Misunderstandings continue. Tensions and conflict mar the peace. Why do we not assume these are standard qualities of human communities and give up the dream of justice, peace and love? Why not say we don't expect anything more than that from people? Would anyone be willing to do that? Almost to a person people will oppose such a surrender.

What is the role of an intentional community, such as the Monterey Church, in the midst of the larger community? This church, I believe without any hesitation, would affirm its commitment to work for justice, peace and love not only in the midst of our own fellowship but among all in the larger community? It is one thing to choose this intention to aspire to be a "beloved community" among people who are mutually agreed, but by what right do we choose and work for it in the larger community? It is at this juncture in the life of both the Monterey Church and Community that I wish for us to come to a deeper level of awareness concerning our lives and actions. So much of what we do is on a level of dim or vague awareness. How much more we are able to do when we really see what we are doing.

Monterey is becoming more conscious of its life as a community. This was demonstrated dramatically in the International Energy Conservation Contest. This instance was dramatic and easy to see, but it gives a picture of a larger, broader happening among us, an increasing concern and attention for things we can and must do together. For several generations most of us were nurtured on the idea of individual self-sufficiency. There is a gradual but a very real movement to search again for those things that bind us together. So it is that we are deepening our awareness that we must involve the whole community in our planning for energy, food, housing and many other things.

I believe a development is taking place in both the Monterey Church and in the larger community that points toward new understandings and advances in the common life we share together. I hear increasing numbers of people expressing concern and caring about what is happening to others on the levels of financial and physical well-being. Inquiries about and prayers for people who are sick occurs on a daily basis. Increasingly people are raising questions about what we can do together to help people earn a living and still live in Monterey. There is a deepening realization that we are bound together by economic realities that are much larger than just your or my personal imagination and ambition. The evidence points toward a growing emergence in Monterey of "we" thinking in the face of increasing economic uncertainty. There are also some recent heartwarming experiences of those who "have" sharing with others who "have no

There is a shifting of focus. Given encouragement and help it could make a profound change in our awareness and empathy for the other. This is what community is all about - a deepened capacity and commitment to serve the larger whole rather than each of us searching for ways to save our own skin.

My concern in these reports is to help us all be as sensitive as possible to the various "tides of the spirit." Is it temporary or does it have the capacity to make us a new kind of people? We can't say yet. Yet if we are people who believe in "the beloved community," we can determine where the weight of our influence shall lie. If it receives your encouragement and mine, if it catches fire in your vision and mine as another opportunity to stand on the side of justice, peace and love then it may be true that the unquenchable human dream of true community shall be set forward.

Virgil V. Brallier, Minister
Monterey United Church of Christ

CATHOLIC CHURCHES



Masses Schedule Our Lady of the Valley, Sheffield,
Saturday, 5:30 PM; Sunday 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM.
Immaculate Conception, Mill River, Sunday 10:00 AM

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Worship and Regular Meetings

Morning Worship each Sunday at 10:30
A.M. for the Winter months in the
Social Room....Childcare each Sunday
at 10:30 AM....Meditation and Prayer
each Thursday 7:30 AM in the Social Room....Prayer group
each Thursday 7:45 PM at the home of Lucy Smith.

Annual Meeting of Congregation

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation was held on Sunday, January 18 beginning with and following the morning worship. The annual reports were distributed on the Sunday before the meeting. In addition to receiving the reports the election of officers was held and the budget was passed. Those at the meeting then enjoyed a covered-dish dinner together.

Graffiti Sunday on January 25

The Morning Worship on Sunday January 25 will employ the ancient (and modern) human desire to write messages in public places. News print will be placed on the walls of the social room - and before or during the service people will be encouraged to write thoughts or feelings related to the day on the newsprint. One may provide a translation of several verses from the scriptures of the day. Thoughts the scriptures provide will be fine - or any observation that forms around the theme of the day will be encouraged. A wish or a prayer jotted on the wall will help.

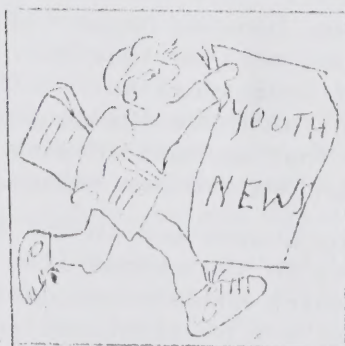
The scriptures will be Psalm 26:1,4,11; Isaiah 9:1-3; I Corinthians 1:10-17; Matthew 4:12-23. The theme is that Christ is the New Day. He is at work dispelling the darkness in the world. He invites us to share his light and to become in turn instruments of light and healing in the world.

The "sermon" in the service will consist in reading the graffiti and inviting the congregation to join in discussing the meanings shared.

The prayers in the worship will gather up concerns that the graffiti have lifted up for us all to center upon.

Any in the community are invited to share in this "graffiti Sunday" which is an experiment in helping the whole worshipping group take a larger responsibility for declaring the gospel, the good news.

BOY SCOUTS



Cub Scouts: The boys from the Bear Den visited the New Marlborough Historical Room in order to increase their knowledge of local history. Also, during the late fall, the Cubs made a leaf chart using the leaves that they had collected while hiking. For Christmas, the Scouts made candle holders as presents for their parents. Recently they have been learning about our state of Massachusetts and studying conservation and protection. With the recent cold weather and snow, the troop has been enjoying such winter sports as sledding, and tobogganing. Also, a pack meeting has been planned for sometime in February.

GIRL SCOUTS

Brownies: During the month of December, the Brownies prepared for Christmas. At the December 4 meeting, they made hanging spice pouches as gifts for their families. They all did a beautiful job and were very pleased with the results. On the 11th, they spent the meeting creating Christmas cards using lots of construction paper and glitter. On December 18, the Junior Scouts put on a beautiful Christmas party for them. Shelby Loder, Janet Thieriot and Jena Blanchard did a lovely job under the direction of their leaders Linda Whitbeck and Nancy Thieriot. The games were fun, the refreshments delicious and caroling together really brought on the Christmas spirit.

Juniors: During December, the Junior girls stuffed and sewed Christmas ornaments. They also planned and put on a surprise Christmas party for Brownie Group #237.

YOUTH GROUP

After much debate and effort, the Youth Group finally purchased a Ping Pong table to be used for their recreation. Also, the group is working on plans for a trip to a big city, most likely New York, in about a month.

Kevin Bradley
Youth Editor



This year, as every year, Christmas celebrations started in mid-December, when Joe Burkholder climbed to the top of the big Norway spruce, back of the main house, and with the help of Doug King, strung it with lights. Late that afternoon a crowd gathered about the tree to sing carols. On the 20th the luminaries-candles placed in sand in paper bags-blazed a trail up the hill near the Colt house, leading the way to the tree, chosen for the main house living room. (The luminaries were introduced at the Farm many years ago, by Mrs. Adelaide Ward, Raymond Ward's mother, who had seen them in Mexico). The tree was carried

down the hill and set in place in the living room. Carols were sung and stories of earlier Christmases were told by Harriet Phillips and Elizabeth Simons. On the 21st members of the Farm family attended the Candlelight Service in Monterey. There were three nights of paper star making at the guest houses - Main, East and McKee House - led by Lis Stucker, with excellent results. Although many guests and staff had gone away for the holidays, there were 86 people present for the Christmas Eve candlelight dinner, which was followed by service in the living-room. Then everyone went down to the barn, to see the manger scene, a living creche. On the 25th, the temperature of 22° below zero failed to chill people's enjoyment of the turkey dinner. George Norien had supervised its roasting the night before, as he made his midnight rounds. A delightful surprise came on the 30th when Hampton and Ruth Price, who now live in Harts-ville, S.C., stopped in for lunch. The New Year's Eve party, a contra dance, was declared the best ever.

Other high lights of the season were the many parties held at the cottages. These were started off by Bob and Ginna Ensign on the 19th. Then Bob and Florence Stucker and Harriet Phillips entertained at Avalon the 21st, followed by Alexander and Olivia Drier at Rockside on the 23rd; Kent, Nancy, Steve and David Smith at Topside on the 25th; and Bob and Mary Anne Carter at the Little House on the 26th. McKee House held a home-made ice cream party on the 27th. On the 28th, Mrs. Schuler, Luel McIntosh's mother welcomed everyone to the Danielsen wing of Topside. At evening service on the 31st, Cory Loder told the story of William and Agnes Gould, on a New Year's eve, long ago, sitting on a park bench in New York City, homeless and practically penniless, working out plans for the immediate future. The old Methodist custom of Bread sharing followed and then there was a main house party. The last open house of the season was held by the Burkholders at the Dauer House. Each of these affairs was distinguished by delicious refreshments, foretelling a new year of good eating and, we hope, high living.

Harriet Phillips and Rose McKee

MONTEREY GRANGE #291

The Monterey Grange had its annual Christmas Party on Saturday December 13 - there was a variety program at 7 - followed by a covered dish supper at 8 - guests were present from Heart of the Berkshires, Worthington, Whately, Cummington, Umpachene, Sandisfield, and Sheffield granges, there was distribution of gifts. The next meeting will be Jan. 21. Bingo will be played in charge of the worthy Master and Stanley Zilta will do refreshments.

Mary Wallace, Lecturer

ATTENTION SENIOR CITIZENS 60 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER (VAN SERVICE)

Starting Tuesday Jan. 6, 1981, and every Tuesday thereafter, the Council on Aging Van will come to Monterey (exclusively) to bring our Elderly to Great Barrington for shopping, etc. NOTE: You may want to avail yourself of the hot lunch program on the same day, at 12 Noon.

Van Schedule: Van will arrive in Monterey at 9:30 AM. At 2:00 PM the van will leave Great Barrington for Monterey. Van reservation number: 528-4773. Luncheon reservation number: 528-1861. Please make reservation at least one day ahead.

Alfred W. Mollé, chairman
Monterey Council on Aging

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

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